

Making Life Work: Innovation

“Throughout our history, American colleges and university have served as the crucible for the world's innovation.. They are a big part of why the United States remains the destination for the world's best and brightest. Investment in education leads to innovation which leads to more opportunity and jobs for all.”

Background:

On February 5, 2013 Majority Leader Eric Cantor delivered a speech at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) entitled “Making Life Work.” Below are some the facts, figures, and background information referenced in the speech.

In 2009, U.S. colleges and universities graduated approximately 40,000 foreign nationals with masters and PhDs.¹ Many of these graduates were then forced to leave the country because there are not enough visa slots in our immigration system to permit them to stay.

As the Congressional Research Service has pointed out, “The number of full-time graduate students in science, engineering, and health fields who were foreign students grew from 91,150 in 1990 to 148,923 in 2009...Despite the rise in foreign student enrollment, the percentage of STEM graduate students with temporary visas in 2009 (32.7%) was comparable to 1990 (31.1%).”²

At America’s top ten patent-generating research universities, 76% of new patents are filed by a foreign-born individual or a team that includes at least one foreign-born individual.³ One-quarter of STEM-focused companies count at least one immigrant as a founder.⁴

Making Life Work Proposal:

In the AEI speech, Majority Leader Cantor discussed the following policy proposal:

Last year, the House passed the bipartisan STEM Jobs Act which reallocated 55,000 visas that under current law are annually awarded based on a lottery, and instead award them to foreign graduates of U.S. universities with advanced degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

¹ Wasem, Ruth Ellen. United States Congress. Congressional Research Service. *CRS Report for Congress: Immigration of Foreign Nationals with Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Degrees*. Washington, D.C. 2012. Web. <<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42530.pdf>>

² *Ibid*

³ "Patent Pending: How Immigrants are Reinventing The American Economy." *Renew Our Economy*. Partnership for a New American Economy. Web. <<http://www.renewoureconomy.org/sites/all/themes/pnae/patent-pending.pdf>>.

⁴ Schulz, Nick. United States. Chamber of Commerce. *Human Capital Imperative: Bringing More Minds to America*. Washington, D.C.: , 2012. Web. <http://www.aei.org/files/2012/01/31/-the-human-capital-imperative-bringing-more-minds-to-america_090338514637.pdf>.